14:Stewart E-5 (1936-1938)1944 NR13 Northern Paiute NR13
Washo NT20

played in 1920 when the Mission Record of the Baptist Mission reported: "Joaquin Brown, our Sunday School Chieftain, said, 'I have been very happy today. While I was doing chores I sang Nearer My God to Thee. I felt all day that my life had been changed.'" But when Joaquin visited each family on Fallon Reservation soliciting money for a peyote meeting and demanding attendance, his neighbors only remembered his violent fits of temper, which had provoked him to club a cow to death, cut out a horse's tongue, permanently cripple his son by flogging, and murder his wife with an ax. Although Joaquin had been released from prison because of model behavior after serving two years of his ten-year sentence, most of the Indians feared him. Apprehension heightened when he was converted to peyotism and excitedly attempted to convey his belief to others. In peyote visions he saw his criminal acts, and thinking other peyotists also saw his hallucinations, he talked freely of his crimes. He wished all men to eat the cactus, be cured, and start life anew. When his desire to advance the religion prompted him to threaten white merchants who refused to contribute large sums to the cause, he was arrested and tried *for insanity. Indians, fearing retaliation, declined to testify against him and Joa*quin was pronounced sane. Local authorities, however, thought him too dangerous to go free; consequently, he was tried and convicted of incest. The man whom Joaquin accused of being the father of his daughter's child died a year before the infant's birth; and Joaquin confessed in peyote meetings to having had sexual relations with his daughter. Under the influence of peyote, Joaquin's son also confessed to incestous relations with his sister.

Emma D. Powell (P,1) and Sara Baker (P,5) were sent to institutions after attending peyote meetings, and Wally Johns (W,9) was probably eligible for one if accounts of her actions are true. Altogether, seven were judged by the unconverted as completely crazy because of peyote, and three others as temporarily deranged. Two women in the latter category were charged with attempting infanticide. Also, several nonpeyotists accused members of looking and acting irrationally after meetings. When carefully questioned, objectors admitted that most peyotists who became "permanently" unbalanced were "very queer" before eating peyote; and in all cases but one, government records revealed long histories of mental instability. The exception was Henry Jack, named by only three as an example of peyote-caused insanity, yet possessing unmistakable delusions of grandeur, believing himself the son of God and ruler of all western Indians. Johnny Cleveland and five nonpeyotists equate peyote and "muipu" (*Datura meteloides* D. C., or something similar), which, they had heard, made California Indians crazy.[a]

That peyote kills is frequently asserted. It is said that all who had used peyote with Leo Okio died within five years, that all Goshute peyote users died, that three McDermitt Indians died after eating it, and that twenty Washo and Paiute Indians died after using peyote during the first two years of Ben's cult. Two Indians expired in meetings, a half dozen others shortly after, the rest several months after using peyote. So loud were these accusations that government doctors made three postmortems to see if death may have resulted from administration of some drug besides peyote. All believers allegedly killed by peyote demonstrably suffered from disease or senility which might at any moment have brought death and which figured as the cause in official reports. It is probable, however, that the rigors of peyote meetings hastened the deaths of a few dangerously ill individuals.[b] Except when persistently

[a] See Steward, 1933, 318, for use of Jimson weed in Owens Valley. Some similarities with peyote are striking.

[b] La Barre reports (114) that one Cheyenne opposed peyote because it was used "to witch people and make them crazy" and that a Kiowa apostatized because her daughter died in spite of a peyote ritual.